

Congresswoman Matsui Delivers Closing Argument in Health Care Debate

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FOR PLANNING PURPOSES

Sunday, March 21, 2010

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Highlights Benefits for Sacramento Families, Seniors and Small Businesses on House Floor

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (D–Sacramento) delivered her closing argument in the health care debate on the House floor today, pledging her support in favor of the health insurance reform legislation before Congress. A Member of the House Energy and Commerce and Rules Committees, Congresswoman Matsui has been involved in the drafting of the health care legislation and subsequent debate for the past year. Her closing remarks, which focused on the benefits of the health care bill for American families, seniors, and small businesses, reflected the conversations she has had with Sacramentans about how to improve our current health care system over the last several years.

Rep. Matsui’s remarks, as delivered on the House floor, are below, and the video can be seen by clicking here.

“I wasn’t here ten or twenty years ago as the health care debate ebbed and flowed. But I am here today. And as an old friend said to me today; ‘There are not too many times in politics that you get to do something monumental.’ And this is the day.

“We have the opportunity today to vote for a health insurance reform bill that will improve the quality of life for millions of American families. It will control costs, strengthen Medicare, and reduce the deficit. If we do nothing, the health care system will continue to work better for insurance companies than it does for the American people.

“Our plan gives people in my hometown of Sacramento more consumer protections, and puts medical decisions back in the hands of patients and their doctors. Insurance companies will be prohibited from denying coverage based on pre-existing conditions or from rescinding policies from people once they get sick. All of these are tools used today by insurance companies to segment the market and maximize profits.

"I have heard so many personal stories from my constituents who are struggling to make ends meet and who are being burdened by the current health insurance market. Tim Sullivan called my office two days ago. Tim is a small businessman who lives day to day in fear of losing his insurance because as someone with glaucoma, his rates are going-up and up and up every year. Tim called to ask why the current system discourages entrepreneurs - average Americans with a good idea - who can't go out on their own because they can't afford their own insurance.

"For millions of Americans like Tim, we have created insurance exchanges that will help to give him the same buying power as a big business or a Member of Congress.

"Elizabeth Bell recently graduated from college and does not yet have a full-time job with benefits. She reached the age where she was dropped from her parents' plan and now has to pay expensive monthly premiums. Shortly after being dropped from her parents' plan, she developed a severe thyroid condition which left her exhausted and weary. Elizabeth wrote me to ask "What would have happened if I didn't have insurance?"

"For Elizabeth and millions of Americans like her, our health care bill will allow young adults to stay on their parents' health care plans through their 26th birthday.

"The current system is not working for Tim - or Elizabeth - or millions more people in districts across our country. And if it's not working for them - it's not working for me. And that's why I will be proud to cast my vote for the bill before us today."

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